

**Understanding MARC 21 Bibliographic Records:  
Description and Series Fields  
Spring 2016  
Week 4**

## **Describing Items: 3xx Fields**

### **Carrier Description Field:**

A carrier is the physical medium in which data, sounds, images, etc. are stored. Your source of information is the item itself. This information is entered into the 300 field.

Both indicators for the 300 field are undefined.

The most commonly used subfields for the 300 field are:

- \$a extent
- \$b other physical details
- \$c dimensions
- \$e accompanying material

Depending on what you are cataloging, these subfields can have different meanings.

### **Extent:**

Extent, which goes in subfield a, is defined as the number of parts that make up the item you are cataloging. For books, this refers to the number of pages. For a DVD or a CD, this would be the number of discs, with the running time in parenthesis.

For example, if you are cataloging a book with 191 pages, the information in subfield a should look like this:

300 \_\_ \$a 191 pages

If a book has preliminary pages that are numbered in Roman numerals before the main pages of the book, include both of them, separated by a comma:

300 \_\_ \$a \$a xviii, 265 pages

Some books, especially children's books, do not have numbered pages. In this case, you specify the number of volumes, and put the word unpagged in parentheses:

300 \_\_ \$a 1 volume (unpagged)

Additionally, some books may have complicated or irregular paging. That is, they may be a mixture of unnumbered and numbered pages and/or the paging changes throughout the volume. In these cases, you state the number of volumes and use the phrase multiple pagings in parentheses:

300 \_\_ \$a 1 volume (multiple pagings)

For visual or sound materials, extent includes a term that describes your item. These terms come from a list found in the RDA rules. For both visual and sound materials, you state what the item is and how many there are. Below, is a list of some of the terms found in the RDA guidelines. For those of you who have a subscription, the full list can be found in Section 3.3 Carrier Type in the online RDA Toolkit.

**Audio carriers**

audio belt  
audio cartridge  
audio cylinder  
audio disc  
audio roll  
audio wire reel  
audiocassette  
audiotape reel  
sound-track reel

**Computer carriers**

computer card  
computer chip cartridge  
computer disc  
computer disc cartridge  
computer tape cartridge  
computer tape cassette  
computer tape reel  
online resource

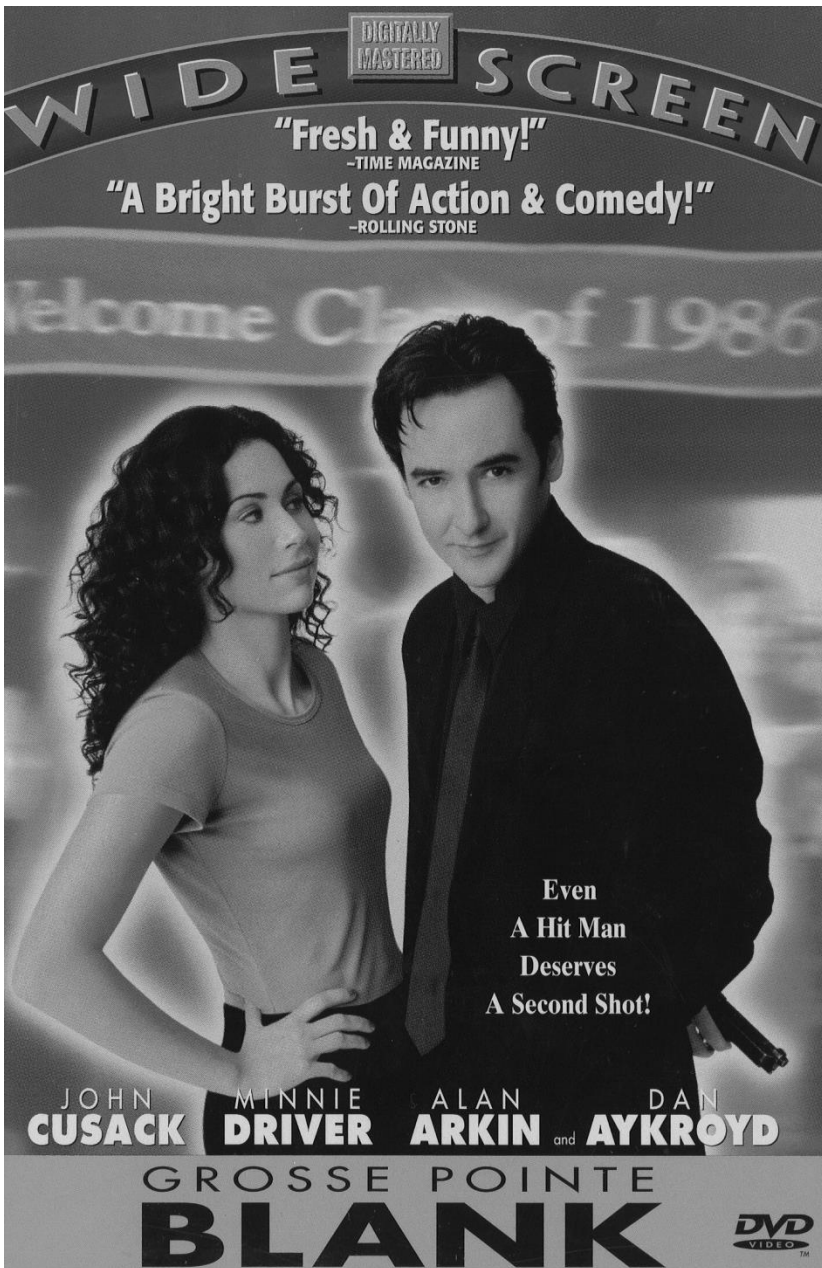
**Unmediated carriers**

card  
flipchart  
object  
roll  
sheet  
volume

**Video carriers**

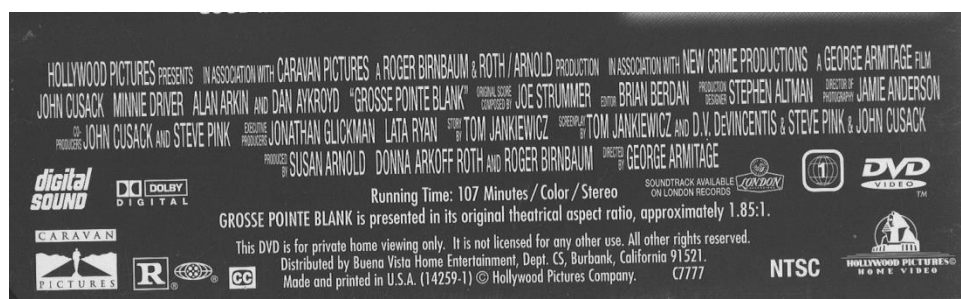
video cartridge  
videocassette  
videodisc  
videotape reel

## EXAMPLES



For a DVD, the correct term to use is videodisc.

300 \_\_ \$a 1 videodisc (107 minutes)





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### C1634 (10 compact discs/11.75 hours)

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UNABRIDGED BOOKS ON DISC

For CDs, the correct term is "sound disc." For an audiobook, you would give the number of discs and the running time.

300 \_\_ \$a 10 sound discs (11 hours, 45 minutes)

## Other Physical Details:

Subfield b is used to enter “other physical details” about your item. Again, these details vary based on the type of item.

With books, you need to include information regarding the presence of illustrations, maps, etc. If the book is illustrated, include the word “illustrations” in subfield b.

300 \_\_ \$a 191 pages : \$b illustrations

For a book with both illustrations and a map, the first two subfields of the 300 field would look like this:

300 \_\_ \$a 144 pages : \$b illustrations, map

Notice the comma between “illustrations” and “map.” Also, subfields a and b are separated by a space, colon, space.

If the illustrations are in color, that should be indicated as well.

300 \_\_ \$a 1 volume (unpaged) : \$b color illustrations

For visual items, the physical details include whether there is sound on the item, and if the visuals are in color or black & white.

For a DVD that is in color and has sound, the first two subfields would look like this:

300 \_\_ \$a 1 videodisc (107 minutes) : \$b sound, color

For a sound recording, the physical details include whether it is analog or digital.

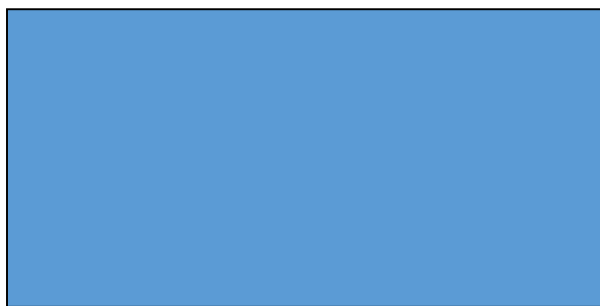
Subfields a and b of the 300 field for a book on CD (which is digital) would look like this:

300 \_\_ \$a 10 sound discs (11 hours, 45 minutes) : \$b digital

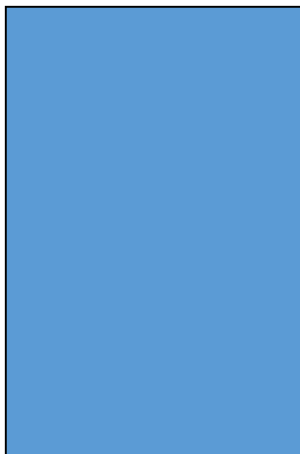
## Dimensions:

Subfield c is used for the dimensions of an item.

Normally, for text items, the dimension refers only to an item’s height. However, there are some exceptions. When the width of a book, pamphlet, or sheet is more than twice the height, give both, and when the height of a book, pamphlet, or sheet is more than twice the width, give both as well. For a book or other text item, the dimensions are given in centimeters.



When a book’s width is more than twice the height, give both. **Example:** \$c 16 x 34 cm



When a book’s height is more than twice the width, give both.

**Example:** \$c 32 x 10 cm



If you are cataloging a book that is 24 centimeters tall, the complete 300 field for this item would look like the following. Again, notice the punctuation. Before subfield c, there is a space, a semi-colon, and another space.

300 \_\_ \$a 191 pages : \$b illustrations ; \$c 24 cm

For a book with no illustrations, there will be no information in subfield b. The punctuation is always determined by what comes after it, so there is still a semi-colon before subfield c.

300 \_\_ \$a xviii, 265 pages ; \$c 24 cm

For DVDs and CDs, the dimension comes from the diameter of the disc. The standard diameter for both is 4 ¾ inches. In this case, we use inches for the dimensions.

300 \_\_ \$a 1 videodisc (107 minutes) : \$b sound, color ; \$c 4 ¾ inches

300 \_\_ \$a 10 sound discs (11 hours, 45 minutes) : \$b digital ; \$c 4 ¾ inches

### Accompanying Material:

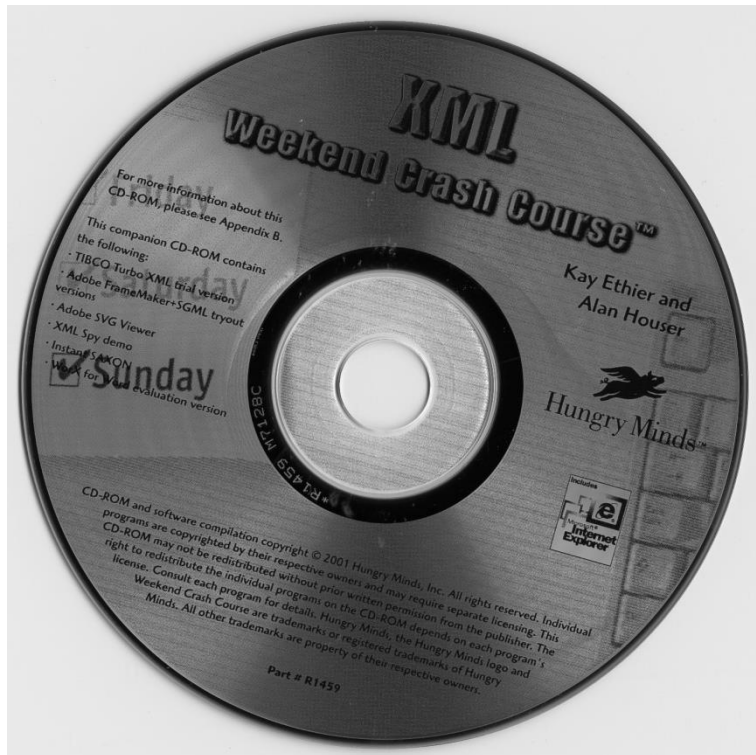
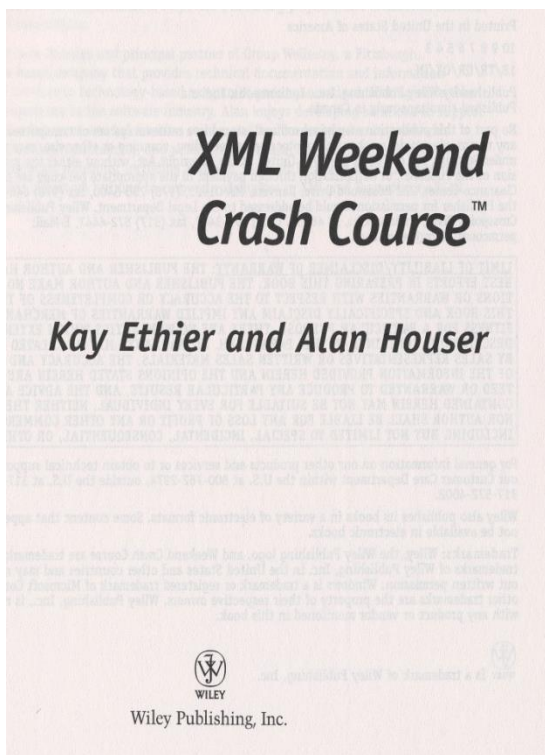
The last part of the 300 field is subfield e, which is used to describe material that accompanies the main item that you are cataloging. Often, this accompanying material can take the form of instruction booklets, posters, CDs, information sheets and other similar items.

xxviii and 349 pages

illustrations

24 centimeters

Includes index



For a book that is accompanied by a CD, the 300 field would look like this:

300 \_\_ \$a xxviii, 349 pages : \$b illustrations ; \$c 24 cm + \$e 1 computer disc (sound, color ; 4 ¾ inches)

### Content Type, Media Type, and Carrier Type Fields:

The 336, 337, and 338 fields are recent additions to MARC. They are used to express an item's content type, media type, and carrier type. These three fields work together to describe what type of item is being cataloged.

The 33x fields, as they are called, replace the General Material Designation (GMD), which you will find in older records. The GMD was a term that appeared in brackets after the title.

**Content type** refers to the general type of material represented by an item being cataloged, regardless of its physical carrier. For example, print books and e-books both have a content type of "text," even though they are physically quite different.

**Media type** is more specific than content type in that it refers specifically to the way in which people interact with the content of a particular item. In other words, what type of device would you use to access the item's content. For example, a DVD and a streaming video will both have the media type "video" because people watch the content visually.

**Carrier type** is the most precise of these terms. It refers to a specific physical object or the container. To go back to our previous example, a DVD will have the carrier type of "videodisc," but a streaming video will have a carrier type of "online resource."

For all three fields, subfield a is where you enter the term that describes your resource. These terms must be chosen from already-established lists; you don't get to create them on your own.

The lists of terms can be accessed through the RDA Toolkit for people who subscribe to that product. They can also be accessed freely on the Library of Congress website, at these pages:

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacontent.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdamedia.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacarrier.html>

For a book, here is how the subfield a of each of these fields should look:

336 \_\_ \$a text

337 \_\_ \$a unmediated

338 \_\_ \$a volume

Here is how the subfield a of each field should look for a DVD:

336 \_\_ \$a two-dimensional moving image

337 \_\_ \$a video

338 \_\_ \$a videodisc

For these fields, subfield b is used for a code that represents the term in subfield a. These codes are optional, as they are not meant to be read by humans, but some libraries are including them because they can be manipulated by computers.

The codes are available on the Library of Congress website as well, on the same pages mentioned earlier:

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacontent.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdamedia.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacarrier.html>

For a book, here is how the subfield a and subfield b should look:

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt  
337 \_\_ \$a unmediated \$b n  
338 \_\_ \$a volume \$b nc

Here is how the subfield a and subfield b should look for a DVD:

336 \_\_ \$a two-dimensional moving image \$b tdi  
337 \_\_ \$a video \$b v  
338 \_\_ \$a videodisc \$b vd

For each of these fields, subfield 2 specifies the source of the terms used in subfield a. This source will be the same regardless of type of item, so the subfield 2 looks the same for both a book and a DVD:

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent  
337 \_\_ \$a unmediated \$b n \$2 rdamedia  
338 \_\_ \$a volume \$b nc \$2 rdacarrier

336 \_\_ \$a two-dimensional moving image \$b tdi \$2 rdacontent  
337 \_\_ \$a video \$b v \$2 rdamedia  
338 \_\_ \$a videodisc \$b vd \$2 rdacarrier

For an item with more than one component (like a book with an accompanying CD-ROM), the 336, 337, and 338 fields can be repeated within a record.

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent  
336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent  
337 \_\_ \$a computer \$b c \$2 rdamedia  
337 \_\_ \$a unmediated \$b n \$2 rdamedia  
338 \_\_ \$a volume \$b nc \$2 rdacarrier  
338 \_\_ \$a computer disc \$b cd \$2 rdacarrier

You may see these fields organized a little differently. Some catalogers may group these fields together by field number.

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent  
337 \_\_ \$a unmediated \$b n \$2 rdamedia  
338 \_\_ \$a volume \$b nc \$2 rdacarrier  
336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent  
337 \_\_ \$a computer \$b c \$2 rdamedia  
338 \_\_ \$a computer disc \$b cd \$2 rdacarrier



Or, when two fields are the same – in this case, the two 336 fields both record a content of text – one of the 336s can be omitted, like so:

```
336 __ $a text $b txt $2 rdacontent
337 __ $a unmediated $b n $2 rdamedia
337 __ $a computer $b c $2 rdamedia
338 __ $a volume $b nc $2 rdacarrier
338 __ $a computer disc $b cd $2 rdacarrier
```

My point is, you will see a lot of variation in the 33x fields. They may not match your item in hand exactly. That is, you may have a book, with an accompanying computer disc, that contains a Word document or PDFs. You may see one 336 with a content of text, but multiple 337s and 338s. It is the same item, only the cataloger chose not to duplicate the 336.

Also, you may need to use the 300 field, along with the 33x fields to make sure you the item you have matches (or is close enough) to the record you are working with.

For items where still images play an important role, your 336, 337 and 338 fields would look like this:

```
336 __ $a text $b text $2 rdacontent
336 __ $a still image $b sti $2 rdacontent
337 __ $a unmediated $b n $2 rdamedia
338 __ $a volume $b nc $2 rdacarrier
```

If you would like to specify which of these fields goes with which item, you can add a subfield 3 to each field.

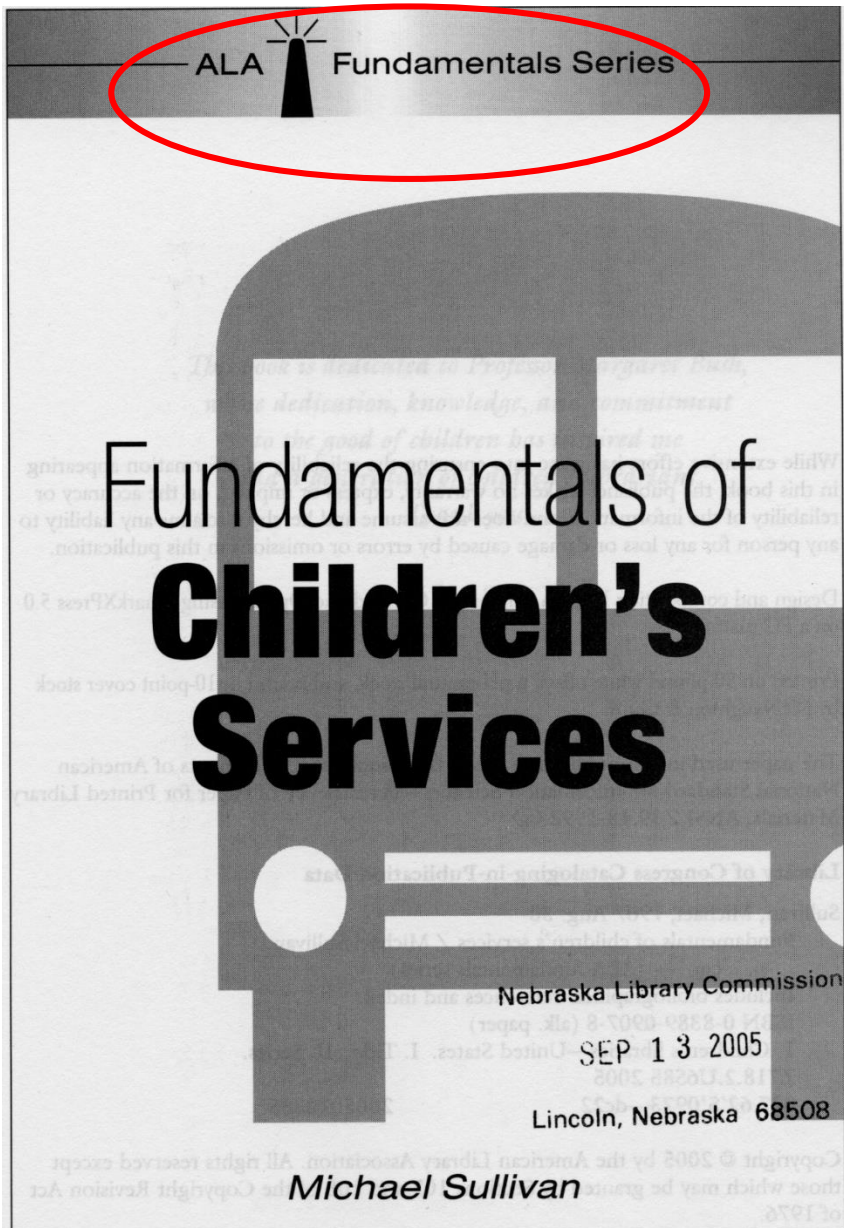
```
336 __ $3 book $a text $b txt $2 rdacontent
337 __ $3 book $a unmediated $b n $2 rdamedia
338 __ $3 book $a volume $b nc $2 rdacarrier
336 __ $3 CD-ROM $a text $b txt $2 rdacontent
337 __ $3 CD-ROM $a computer $b c $2 rdamedia
338 __ $3 CD-ROM $a computer disc $b cd $2 rdacarrier
```

The terms in subfield 3 do not need to come from a particular list; you can use whichever terms you choose. This has the added benefit of getting language in the record that is easier for patrons to understand (CD-ROM instead of computer disc, for example).

## Series: The 490 and 8xx Fields

A series entry is needed for items that, in addition to their individual titles, also have a collective title that is shared with other items. Series entries involve the 490 field and an 8XX field. The 490 field is where you transcribe the series statement exactly as it appears on the item you are cataloging. The 8XX field is where you input the authorized form of the series name, meaning the form of the series name that librarians have agreed to use so that patrons can find all the books in a series, even if the series name appears differently on each item.

In the 490 field, the first indicator shows whether or not the series title is traced. Traced means an authorized form of the heading is used to index the series title in your catalog so that it shows up in a title search. Sometimes this authorized form is the same as what appears on the item, and sometimes it is different.



For this item, the series title appears on the book as "ALA Fundamentals Series."

490 1 \_ \$a ALA fundamentals series

To verify that this is the official heading, you should check the Library of Congress authority record to be sure. You can access the Library of Congress Authorities at <http://authorities.loc.gov>.

[e Library of Congress](#)



## LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AUTHORITIES

Using *Library of Congress Authorities*, you can browse and view authority headings for Subject, Name, Title and Name/Title combinations; and download authority records in MARC format for use in a local library system. This service is offered free of charge.

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Once you have clicked on Search Authorities, you will want to click on Title Authority Headings and enter your search term.

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## LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AUTHORITIES

Help

Search

Search History

Headings List

Start Over

SOURCE OF HEADINGS: Library of Congress Online Catalog

### Authority Headings Search

Search Text:

Search Type:

Subject Authority Headings  
Name Authority Headings  
**Title Authority Headings**  
Name/Title Authority Headings  
Keyword Authorities (All)





Scroll down for  
Search Hints

100 records per page ▼

Begin Search

Clear Search

In this case, the search appears to show several options. Select the one with the red button that says Authorized Heading. For this heading, there are two authorized headings for ALA fundamentals series. If you click on both of them, they are the same. However, this may not always be the case.

◀ Previous    Next ▶			
#	Bib Records	<i>select icon in first column to...</i> View Authority Headings/References	Type of Heading
 1	0	ALA fundamentals	non-series title
 2	0	ALA fundamentals	series title
 3	3	ALA fundamentals series	series title
 4	0	ALA fundamentals series	non-series title
5	1	ALA glossary of library and information science. Japanese.	non-series title
6	1	ALA glossary of library and information science. Vietnamese.	non-series title

When you click through to the authority record, the title listed in the 130 field is the authorized form. If your search term appears in the 430 field, then you need to use the authorized form that appears in the 130 field. The term that appears in the 130, is what you will enter in the 830 field.

LC control no.: n 2004141779  
 LCCN Permalink: <https://lccn.loc.gov/n2004141779>  
 HEADING: ALA fundamentals series  
 000 00799cz a2200217n 450  
 001 6384849  
 005 20041101135818.0  
 008 041101n| acaabaaan |a ana  
 010 \_\_ |a n 2004141779  
 040 \_\_ |a DLC |b eng |c DLC  
 130 \_0 |a ALA fundamentals series  
 410 2\_ |a American Library Association. |t ALA fundamentals series  
 430 \_0 |a ALA fundamentals  
 430 \_0 |a Fundamentals series  
 643 \_\_ |a Chicago |b American Library Association  
 644 \_\_ |a f |5 DLC  
 645 \_\_ |a t |5 DPCC |5 DLC  
 646 \_\_ |a s |5 DLC  
 670 \_\_ |a Giesecke, Joan. Fundamentals of library supervision, 2005: |b ECIP ser. t.p. (ALA fundamentals series) data view (first installment of the new ALA Fundamentals series)  
 670 \_\_ |a Email from publisher, Nov. 1, 2004 |b (confirmed new series title; different authors)  
 953 \_\_ |a lh39

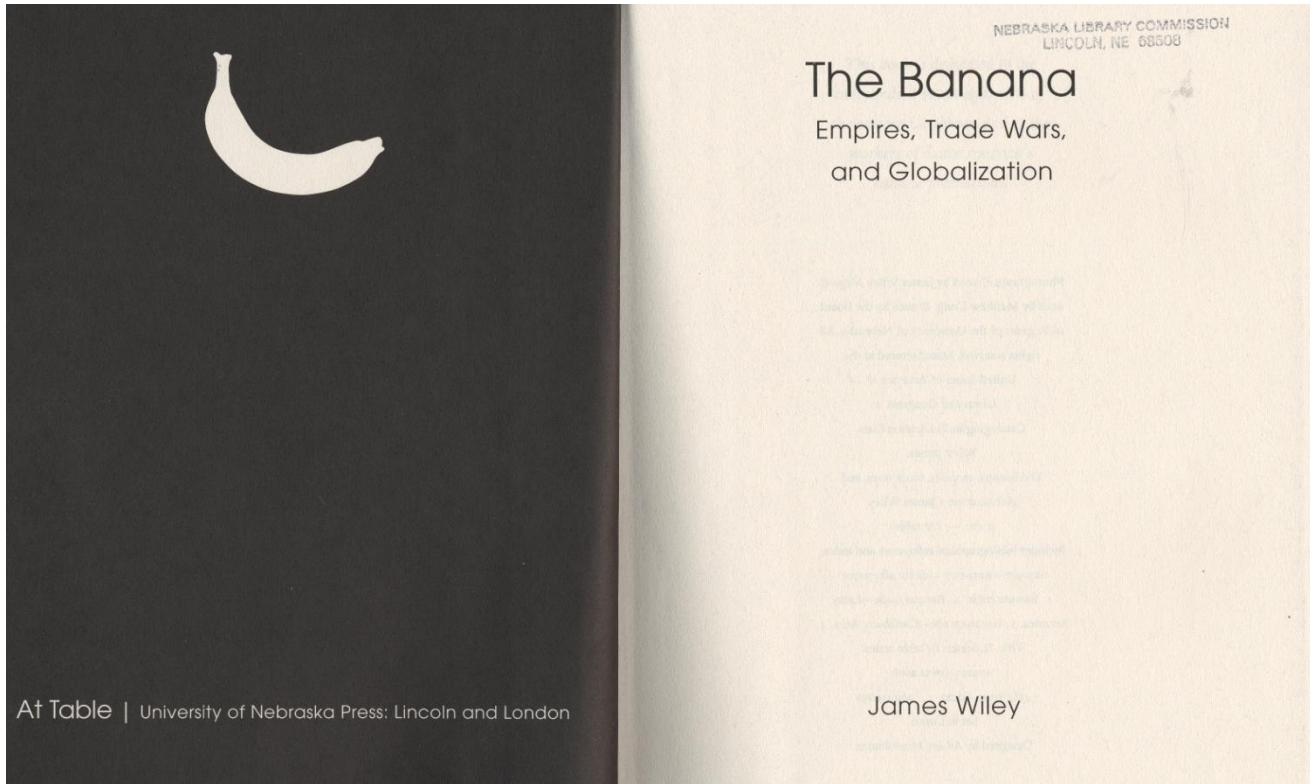
In this case, the series title on the item and the authorized form are exactly the same. As you saw in the example, the first indicator of 1 in the 490 field means that the series is traced or the authorized form is used to index the series title. **Even though they are the same, you still need an 8xx field.** The second indicator of 0 in the 830 field indicates that there are no non-filing characters (since it is a title field, this is just like the second indicator of the 245 field).

490 1\_ \$a ALA fundamentals series  
 830 \_0 \$a ALA fundamentals series.

Sometimes the volume number or other sequential designation will be given for a series item. This goes in subfield v in both the 490 and the 830 field.

490 1\_ \$a BoardSource governance series ; \$v bk. 7  
 830 \_0 \$a BoardSource governance series ; \$v bk. 7

Sometimes the authorized form of the series title is different than what appears on the item. In this case, the series is given on the item as “At Table”.



The authorized form is “At table series”.

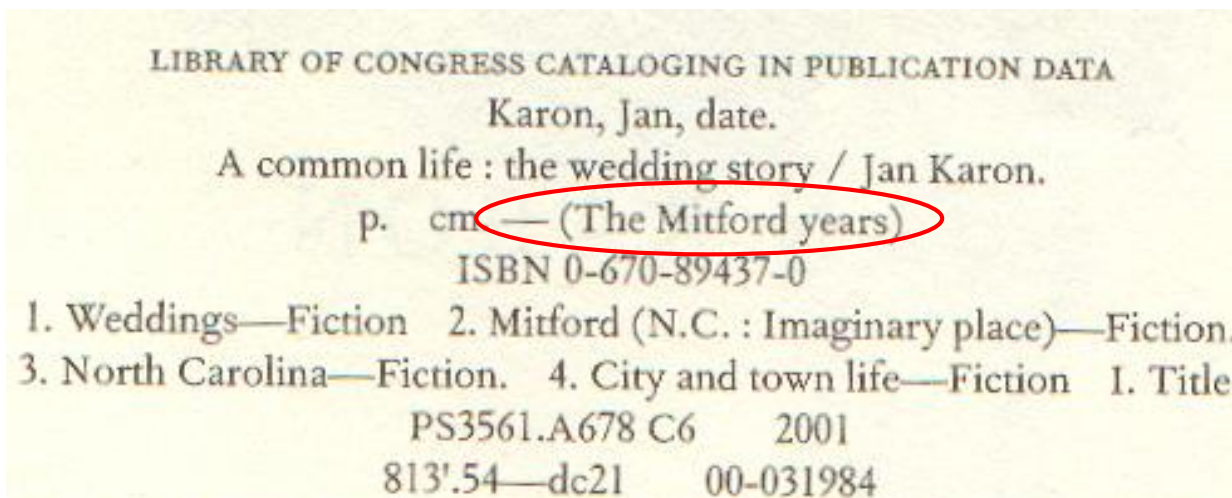
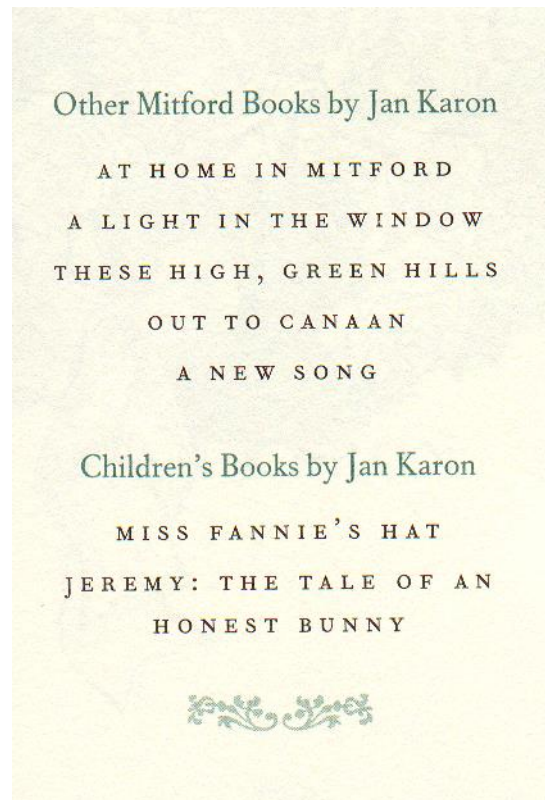
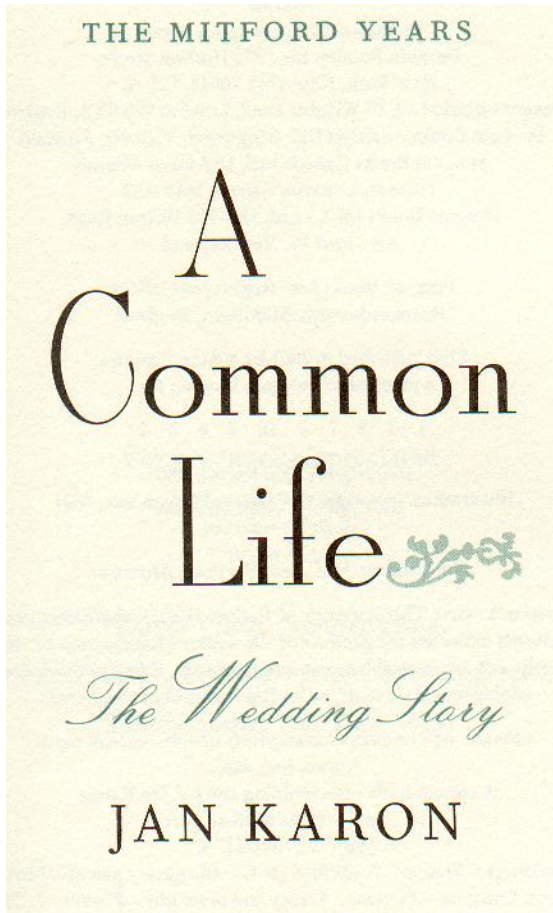
In this case, what appears in the 490 field is different than what appears in the 830 field.

490 1\_ \$a At table

830 \_0 \$a At table series.



Here is an example of a book where the series' authorized version begins with the author's name, despite the fact that series title is "The Mitford Years."



If you look up "The Mitford years" in the authority file, the authorized version is a personal name heading. This happens when author writes the entire series. Unlike the previous example, this series statement will go into an 800 field because it begins with a personal name. The author's name is in subfield a, the birth date is in subfield d, and the title of the series is in subfield t.

490 1\_ \$a Mitford years

800 1\_ \$a Karon, Jan, \$d 1937- \$t Mitford years.



When dealing with series fields, you will sometimes see records with 440 fields. Until 2008, the 440 was used when the transcribed form of a series title and the authorized form of a series title were the same. If you have old records with 440 fields in them, your system will still index them, so you do not need to change them. When downloading new records, if you have the time, you should change a 440 field to a 490 field and add an 830 field with the same form of the series title.

Another thing you might want to be aware of, is that for the last couple years, the Library of Congress has not been doing series authority work. They are just transcribing the series statement in a 490 field with a first indicator of 0, without checking for an authorized form. Depending on how much time you have in your workflow, you can accept these records as is, or take the time to search for the authorized forms.